

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Varun Aggarwal  
29 Royal Grove  
Irvine, CA 92620

The Honorable Cormac J. Carney  
U.S. District Judge  
Central District of California  
Ronald Reagan Federal Building and United States Courthouse  
411 West Fourth Street, Courtroom 9 B  
Santa Ana, CA, 92701-4516

Dear Judge Carney,

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and the attached “Release Plan” which describes my self-directed pathway to becoming a better person while meeting my obligations. Together with the guidance of the probation office and the accountability of my loved ones, I am committed to making amends and making my victims whole by working tirelessly to pay my restitution. I will be productive, reconcile with society, and strengthen relationships with my family and the local community.

During the intervening years, I have dedicated myself to creating opportunities to give back to my community and have integrated the sentencing goals of deterrence and rehabilitation into my daily practice. I have been proactively seeking help to address any underlying issues that contributed to my behavior, and I am committed to addressing these issues head on.

I will continue developing and updating my release plan to prepare for the best outcomes. My release plan includes the following information:

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| I. Identifying Information               | VI. Community Support |
| II. Financial Obligations                | VII. Risk Assessment  |
| III. Education & Course Participation    | VIII. Personal Plan   |
| IV. Transportation and Housing           | IX. Advisors          |
| V. Medical Prescriptions & Substance Use |                       |

I hope you find this release plan useful in understanding my continued commitment to being a law-abiding and valuable member of society.

Respectfully,

Varun Aggarwal

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**Identifying Information:**

Name: My name is Varun Aggarwal.

Date of Birth and Age: I was born on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1981, and I am now 42 years old.

Today's Date: February 20, 2024

Sentence: TBD

**Financial Obligations:**

I am fully aware that I will owe restitution to my victims. I recognize the seriousness of this obligation and have proactively developed a plan to pay restitution. Making my victims whole is my number one priority, and I view it not only as a financial and legal obligation, but also a moral obligation.

Throughout the pre-trial phase, I maintained steady employment at Home Depot while concurrently establishing a business focused on life and business coaching. This initiative has enabled me to allocate a minimum of \$200 per month towards my restitution fund. Moreover, I have undertaken the pursuit of seven certifications in life and business coaching, detailed further in the education section below. I am optimistic that these qualifications will enhance my employability and afford me the opportunity to contribute even more substantially towards restitution in the future.

In anticipation of the formal imposition of restitution at sentencing, I took the proactive measure of commencing savings for this purpose. I recognized the importance of not delaying this crucial endeavor and assumed responsibility for initiating it at the earliest opportunity.

In addition to my commitment to restitution, I am mindful of my family's financial obligations, encompassing mortgage payments, property taxes, utilities, medical expenses, and other essential expenditures. I am confident that my wife's and my combined income will sufficiently cover these obligations while also making meaningful monthly payments towards restitution.

I pledge unwavering dedication to the task of making my victims whole and fulfilling my restitution obligations. I am prepared to exert relentless effort and dedication towards this objective, recognizing the significance of amending the harm caused by my actions.

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### **Education and Course Participation:**

My family raised me in Irvine, where I attended school at University High School. After graduating in 2000, I began taking courses at two nearby junior colleges. I matriculated to the University of Southern California after one year, where I continued my studies. I graduated with a bachelor's degree in 2004.

I obtained the following 7 certifications related to life and business coaching:

1. Certified Entrepreneurship and Business Coach (Completed 8/11/2023)
2. The Brian Hamilton Foundation Starter U: How to Start and Grow a Business (Completed 8/25/2023)
3. Certified Professional Life Coach (Completed 1/12/2024)
4. Certified Happiness Coach (Completed 2/8/2024)
5. Certified Life Purpose Coach (Completed 2/10/2024)
6. Certified Goal Success Coach (Completed 2/12/2024)
7. Certified Master Life Coach (Completed 2/12/2024)

Additionally, I intend to continue my self-education in the fields of life coaching, business coaching, and addiction recovery. I have found that assisting people through personal challenges fills me with an incredible sense of purpose. Hearing from my clients that I've impacted their lives is gratifying in a way that I've never found with previous employment or hobbies.

### **Transportation and Housing:**

My family—including my wife, two children, and parents—live in Irvine, California. I will reside with them at the following address:

29 Royal Grove  
Irvine, CA 92620

Our home is on the tree-lined streets of one of the safest cities in the United States. My children play outside at the nearby parks; anything we need is within a short walk of our home. Neighbors know one another here and look out for one another. I will have all the necessary support in this home to return to a healthy, law-abiding life.

Additionally, I drive a 2023 Hyundai Elantra, which is insured in my name and titled under my spouse's name. I will rely on this car to commute to work and meet familial obligations — including providing for my parents' and uncle's medical needs.

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**Medical Prescriptions and Substance Use:**

As noted in my PSR, I suffer from hearing loss and wear specialized hearing aids in both ears. I wear prescription glasses. I also have a documented history of chronic sinus infections\* caused by post-nasal drip. For this, I am prescribed Flonase, which I take daily, as directed by my primary care physician. Further, I am pre-diabetic and maintain a rigid, vegetarian diet to maintain my health and in alignment with my Hindu faith.

I have a documented history of excessive drinking. However, through the support of my family, the AA fellowship, and the guidance of my sponsor, I have remained alcohol-free since February 2022 (my last drink was on February 8, 2022).

\* I have an allergy to Augmentin, a prescription antibiotic; however, I am not allergic to amoxicillin.

**Community Support:**

This plan includes letters of support from my friend, faith leader, and current employer. These letters are attached at the end of the release plan.

Support Letter 1: Dr. Arun Gupta, Friend, 909-368-7671

Support Letter 2: Deepak Sharma, President, Irvine Hindu Mandir, 714-797-7164

Support Letter 3: Eddie Reese, Store Manager, Home Depot, 949-356-2676

**Risk Assessment:**

Reading the Bureau of Prisons' website taught me a great deal about risk assessments. The website identifies 13 factors that can influence criminal behavior. Below is a self-assessment of the 13 risk factors:

1. Anger/hostility: I do not have any issues with anger or hostility.
2. Antisocial peers: I do not associate with criminal peers.
3. Cognitions: I do not have any learning or cognitive impairments.
4. Dyslexia: I have never been diagnosed with dyslexia.
5. Education: I have a college degree and over the past year, I have obtained 7 certifications. I am committed to furthering my education.
6. Family/parenting: I have outstanding relationships with my immediate and extended family.
7. Finance/poverty: My family is financially stable.
8. Medical: I have hearing loss and maintain a strictly vegetarian diet.

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9. Mental Health: I have generalized anxiety, which I address through regular therapy.
10. Recreation/Leisure/Fitness: When not enjoying time with family, I go on walks, and I like to read.
11. Substance abuse: I have a problem with drinking that I am addressing through AA meetings, my sponsor, and the support from my family, especially my wife. I have not had a drink in over 2 years.
12. Trauma: I began having panic attacks in 2015, which I am addressing through regular therapy.
13. Work: I work at Home Depot as a Sales Associate and coach clients as a certified life and business coach.

Based on what I've read about the risk assessment for recidivism, I anticipate I will score a minimum risk of recidivating due to the following factors:

- I have a strong and supportive community that surrounds me.
- I do not associate with criminals.
- I am in good physical health.
- I anticipate being able to earn an income and have a place to live and a car to drive.

To correct my past actions, I will continue to address all underlying issues, including participating in programs recommended by my probation officer, therapists, sponsor and pursuing self-directed education.

**Personal Plan:**

My criminal behavior was rooted in my growing addiction to gambling and problematic drinking, and the financial pressures and responsibilities I faced at a young age. I have been proactively seeking help to address any underlying issues that contributed to my behavior and addressing these issues head on. Although it might seem strange to some, I am grateful for the justice system's intervention, which has allowed me to reflect on my self-defeating behavior and get the help I so needed. Since leaving my employer on February 8, 2022, my goal has been to address my underlying issues with all available therapeutic and rehabilitative programming.

With the support of my wife, I stopped drinking on February 9, 2022. I have not consumed alcohol in more than 2 years nor placed a bet in over 15 months, since November 14, 2022. I am committed to never drinking or gambling again. I am actively involved in twelve-step recovery communities for alcohol and gambling addiction and will continue to attend meetings in the future. Also, I completed the California Department of Public Health, Office of Problem Gambling treatment program for gambling disorder called California Gambling Education and Treatment Services (CalGETS) which consisted of 16 sessions. I will continue to attend therapy

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sessions to address my mental health and addiction concerns. My family and sponsor will hold me accountable for successfully participating in these programs, and I have created accountability systems among my peers in these groups. Additionally, I was voted anonymously to be the meeting leader for the biggest GA meeting in Orange County at Mariners Church which had a 6-month commitment. However, I could not take on the role at that time. I am fully committed to becoming the meeting leader in the future.

I have maintained steady employment at Home Depot since December 2022 and will continue to work with them in the future. I am grateful for the support and trust that they have placed in me even though they are aware of my criminal conduct.

Additionally, in 2023, I established a business focused on life and business coaching. I have accumulated seven distinct coaching certificates allowing me to help people in various areas of their life. With the help of loved ones, I created a website ([www.yourguidedjourney.com](http://www.yourguidedjourney.com)) to educate others on finances, life strategies, and time management. I intend to continue writing on topics associated with life, business, and addiction in the future.

In addition to my coaching work, I'm also committed to helping individuals recover from gambling addiction and alcoholism and build new lives. To accomplish this goal, I have taken steps toward achieving my California Peer Support Specialists Certification, which will allow me to assist people in recovery in a more formal capacity. I aim to be a leader by helping people through addiction recovery and utilizing my skills as a certified life coach. I want to show them that there is a path out of addiction that will lead them to a more healthy, purposeful, passionate, and prosperous life. This is aligned with my passion to serve others. The revenue generated through this business will be put towards my restitution while also creating the opportunity to help others desist from crime by imparting the wisdom I've gained through my mistakes.

My family is the most important part of my life. My wife, young sons, and my parents are the loves of my life. The crimes I committed have placed enormous strain on them. In addition to my victims, I need to make amends to them through my actions to become a better man. I intend to demonstrate accountability for my actions and goals for self-improvement. I will continue to provide support to my oldest son who has autism, my dad who was disabled in 2013 and has sarcoidosis, my mom who has scoliosis, and my uncle who has Parkinson's.

Faith is important to my family. We strive to lead a life in accordance with the scriptures of Hinduism. I regularly attend and volunteer at the Irvine Hindu Mandir (1861 Reynolds Ave, Irvine, CA 92614). I maintain a rigorous volunteering schedule of at least 12 hours per week and will continue to volunteer in the future. This has allowed me to build the skills necessary to support a faith community and given me a greater appreciation of my responsibility. I will grow in my faith and support my boys in their spiritual and educational journeys.

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Additionally, I will continue to volunteer for organizations like Prison Professors to help justice impacted individuals find meaningful work. I have found immense joy in helping others in their journey.

**Advisors:**

I worked with my family, faith community, current employer, and sponsor to architect my Release Plan. They will be my accountability partners as I work to execute this plan. I will continue to revise this plan, memorializing my steps to prepare for future success.



**Dr. Arun Gupta**  
**12702 Sierra Creek Drive**  
**Riverside, CA 92503**

October 16, 2023

Honorable Cormac J. Carney  
United States District Court  
Central District of California, Southern Division  
Ronald Regan Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse  
411 West Fourth Street  
Courtroom 9 B  
Santa Ana, CA 92701-4516

Your Honor,

I write this letter in support of my friend, Varun Aggarwal. When I immigrated to the United States in 1992, I was 14 years old and just entering high school. I was at a very awkward stage in my life. Varun and his family were already here. We became close friends and formed a strong connection early on. He showed me the American culture and helped me adjust to a new way of life. He truly helped me acclimate and become a "new American," and for over 30 years we have remained close.

Growing up, I often spent entire weekends at his house where we rode bikes, played video games, went bowling, and spent summer days at the pool. I remember those times very fondly. Our relationship has grown and evolved as we have moved through the various phases of our lives, including college, marriage, children, and careers.

In 2018, I was feeling a tremendous amount of pressure at work and had a bit of a breakdown. I was living in Riverside, working at a very busy dental practice, and became overwhelmed and filled with anxiety. During this period, Varun traveled to Riverside at least twice per week for a period to spend time with me. He talked with me and helped me get through this very stressful time. He would spend time playing with my kids, became my trusted confidant, offered advice, guided me, and provided valuable perspective. In short, he played a vital role in helping me overcome one of the most trying times of my life. I will always be eternally grateful for his kindness, support, and brotherhood. He made sure everyone was taken care of, including me.

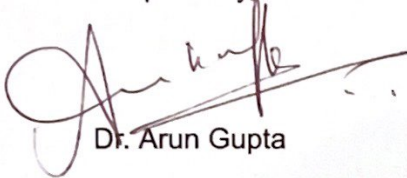
His arrest was a tremendous shock. When it initially happened, he knew he had made mistakes. After several months he began to realize the gravity of what he had done and



became extremely remorseful. We spoke almost every night, and it was at this point I knew he had hit total rock bottom. He had always believed in God, but this experience took his faith to another level. Instead of making excuses or blaming others, he began to take ownership of his poor decisions and became committed to making amends and trying to live life differently.

Varun is especially devastated by the difficult position he has put his family in because they are all very dependent on him. He is more than willing to accept whatever punishment the court deems fit, but I respectfully ask you for leniency on his behalf. I know he will spend the rest of his life trying to make things right and believe with all my heart that he deserves the chance.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Arun Gupta', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Arun Gupta

29 Rhode Island  
Irvine, CA 92606  
[DeepakSharma.usa@outlook.com](mailto:DeepakSharma.usa@outlook.com)

October 3, 2023

Honorable Cormac J. Carney  
United States District Court  
Central District of California, Southern Division  
Ronald Regan Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse  
411 West Fourth Street, Courtroom 9 B  
Santa Ana, CA 92701-4516

Your Honor,

I serve as President of Mandir, a Hindu Temple located in Irvine, California. I have known the Aggarwal family for many years, as they attend this temple, and Varun in particular who has become active in the past 3-4 years.

The CFO of our temple was looking for an assistant about a year ago and Varun volunteered immediately. He helps with all the day-to-day financial issues, including coordinating with vendors, drafting invoices and getting them paid, getting estimates for any work that needs to be performed at the facility, and scheduling such work. In addition, he volunteers and helps with our worship services, including the setting up of events, taking down and cleaning up afterward, and helping with food.

I had no idea of Varun's legal issues. He came to me on his own, after he had been arrested, to tell me of his troubles. He was very honest and transparent with me and asked me if I wanted to remove him from his duties within the temple. I felt it took a great deal of courage to come to me the way he did, and I believe that everyone deserves forgiveness. Plus, he was doing a terrific job and I had no reason to doubt his abilities or honesty. He is very repentant and sets an example for the other men in our temple. There is nothing he won't do to help – no job is beneath him. He will do dishes, vacuum the floors, stack chairs and he has never said no to anything that has been asked of him. He is that humble.

Varun explained to me that his childhood was very focused on money. His family immigrated when he was very young, and they did not have a lot of money. They struggled, and he felt a deep responsibility to provide for them and make up for the things they could not afford when he was growing up. He got caught up in materialism, but when he realized what he was doing was wrong, he went to his employer to explain it and make it right. To this day he feels a tremendous amount of shame and guilt and just wants to make things right. He made some very poor choices

but is willing to accept whatever consequences the court sees fit. Thank you for allowing me to speak on his behalf.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deepak", written over a horizontal line.

Deepak Sharma

Eddie Reese  
22602 Cottonwood Circle  
Lake Forest, CA 92630

October 3, 2023

Honorable Cormac J. Carney  
United States District Court  
Central District of California, Southern Division  
Ronald Regan Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse  
411 West Fourth Street  
Courtroom 9 B  
Santa Ana, CA 92701-4516

Your Honor,

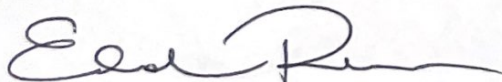
I currently hold the position of Store Manager at The Home Depot and hired Varun Aggarwal approximately 1 year ago as a sales representative in the Flooring & Décor department. He is in charge of all special-order, high-end flooring, and is responsible for upselling The Home Depot installation packages. His customer service is exceptional. He has such a way with people and is very good at building relationships.

At The Home Depot, we pride ourselves on having the best customer service of anyone in a similar industry in the entire world. Varun is very impressive and what stood out the most to me first and foremost was his gentle, humble nature. He doesn't put on airs. Not only is he very educated, but he has a way of connecting with the customers that creates immediate trust. We encourage our customers to complete surveys and Varun began getting accolades in just his first month on the floor. He has no fear, and people are attracted to his no-nonsense, calm demeanor. He goes out of his way to help customers, is very knowledgeable, and has received several merit-based badges based on his superb customer service. We work as a team; bonuses are paid based on each department's overall sales. He embraces this concept wholeheartedly and is always trying to be of assistance to his fellow team members.

Varun was very open with me when I hired him about his legal troubles. I believe that we all make mistakes, we all deserve a second chance and Varun epitomizes these values with his humble attitude, his work ethic, and his desire to do what is best for his family. He has never made any excuses for his behavior and acknowledged to me that he "screwed up big time". He has expressed to me his deep remorse and his desire to accept responsibility for his actions, take his punishment, and move on. I hire people for a living and have read people very well. I have never doubted his sincerity, I would hire him again in a second, and if he does have to go away for some time, I would hire him back once he completes his sentence. It is my sincere hope that you will find it in your heart to show him leniency at sentencing, as he is a good man, and is eager to put this all behind him and just live an honest, simple life with his family. Thank you for your time and if you should need anything else from me, please do not hesitate to contact me at (949) 356-2676.

Sincerely yours,

Eddie Reese

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Eddie Reese", with a stylized, flowing script.